

Italian, Egyptian  
hostages freed  
in Iraq

Erap defense  
puts Chin's  
credibility on trial

HSDC projects  
P57 to \$1  
by year's end

La Salle,  
FEU dispute  
UAAAP title

Let us now  
thank, honor  
Ryan Cayabyab



## Bataan newsman killed; seventh slain this year

HEAL, Bataan—A news correspondent of a national news outlet was killed on his way home from a news gathering in a town yesterday, police said.

Benito Rodriguez, 41, was driving on his motorcycle when he was shot four times in the head and the body, police said. He died on the spot.

Rodriguez is the fifth journalist killed in the area this year.

Local headlines | Inquirer.com.ph

Thursday, September 30, 2004 • 32 pages • Vol. 19 • No. 291

## Band plays, sings different tune: It's cool to be a priest

Called 'The Cool Priest', a band from Calicut, India, is making waves in the Philippines. The group is known for its unique sound and its members' commitment to social justice.



# Amnesty for AFP rebs set

## Bishops to monitor barangay 'dev't fun'

By Benito S. Nolasco

IT IS government delinquency in the form of police to provide barangay officials with "development fun?"

Following this is an article by Bishop Antonio Leonidas of the Philippines in a leading national newspaper, the Philippine Daily Inquirer, on the subject of the police's role in the development of the barangay.

In a statement released yesterday, the CBCP National Secretariat, led by Bishop Antonio Leonidas and other bishops, called for the police to monitor the development of the barangay.

The AFP has had government troops in the area for years, but the police have been the main force in the area.

There are 41,274 barangays nationwide. Each of these has a population of not less than 100 people.

Police chief a Commission on the subject of the police's role in the development of the barangay.



BOAT YOUR BOAT

Police on board in the area in the past, the country's first. It is a protest against the police's role in the development of the barangay.

## DOH opens door-to-door family planning drive

By Benito S. Nolasco

DOH is on the way for women who are not using any form of contraception.

The Department of Health is taking a door-to-door family planning drive in the area.

Early this year, the DOH will target 500,000 of these women to be the target group of the drive.

Health Secretary Manuel Alzate said in a statement, "We will go door-to-door to identify those who are not using any form of contraception."

The drive will be conducted in the area of the Department of Health's jurisdiction.



NEWTON GARCIA. Deputy director of the President's continuing support.

## Palace: GSIS chief won't go on leave even with graft raps

By Gil Collantes and  
Cristina C. Aranda

NEWTON Garcia, deputy director of the President's continuing support, is not expected to take a leave from his post despite graft charges filed against him with the Office of the Ombudsman.

According to three sources, Garcia is not expected to take a leave from his post despite graft charges filed against him with the Office of the Ombudsman.

## Diesel price expected to soar until December

By Gil Collantes

THE PRICE of diesel, which is used by public buses and jeeps, is expected to rise in the coming months due to tight supply and rising demand.

It is expected that diesel prices will rise up to P50.00 per barrel in the coming months.

In a phone interview, Energy Secretary Vince Sotto said that while diesel prices were expected to rise, it would not be as high as P50.00 per barrel.

Meanwhile,

"We want to make sure that oil prices do not rise too high."

It is expected that diesel prices will rise up to P50.00 per barrel in the coming months.

It is expected that diesel prices will rise up to P50.00 per barrel in the coming months.

In a phone interview, Energy Secretary Vince Sotto said that while diesel prices were expected to rise, it would not be as high as P50.00 per barrel.



WSP that it was so easy to bring up in the President's support in the coming months.

## Tabara allies vow to destroy Red 'fanatics'

By Benito S. Nolasco

THEY will be the first to be destroyed, said the allies of the President.

The allies of the President are expected to take action against the Red 'fanatics' in the coming months.

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# Ombudsman wants to seize DPWH exec's unexplained wealth

By Bernard P. Reyes

OMBUDSMAN Antonio Maricela has filed before the Sandiganbayan a forfeiture case against former public works regional director Ramon Pangasinan in bid to recover a sizable portion of the P11.7 million he allegedly once received while in office.

His case dovetailed with that of Douglas Cordillera and sister Rita Pila-Luna and Pantea Sembrano who

recently finalized an "amiable" settlement with the state.

"This is the first among many forfeiture cases to be filed against officials who failed the integrity check program of the government," said Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa Igones.

Last year, the Ombudsman filed graft charges against Pangasinan and his relatives for allegedly receiving an estimated P9.7 million in 20 public contracts during

his 17 years in service.

Pangasinan was also the first official to be charged in the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) scandal by failing the integrity check test plan by the government last year. The public works regional director was suspended for six months in 2003 for this.

Pangasinan, whose annual salary was only P307,236, had an annual net worth of P13.2 million in 2001, but graft investiga-

tor and personal properties worth P11.7 million, many of which had been placed in the name of his immediate relatives.

Among his undeclared properties were a 1994 Cadillac in Los Angeles, California, worth P2 million; a weekend house in Los Angeles, worth P2 million; a weekend house in Ayala, Alabang, worth P34 million; and a weekend house in Laguna worth P14,000.

The properties he had alleged

ly earned from his 2001 statements of assets and liabilities amounted to P79.2 million.

The Ombudsman noted that the public works official's net worth grew to P14.1 million in 2005 from P13.2 million in 1996. His accumulated salary in 15 years of service stood at P2.5 million.

The income was not linked to much. Pangasinan on his weekly phone.

Since he failed the government's integrity check program early last year, he has refused to give interviews to the press. He settled quietly himself.

Three years ago, Pangasinan was reported to have been dismissed and allegedly paid between P30 million and P50 million to return money to his capons. It is also also reported in the press that allegedly spending more than P50 million to refinance the ancestral house of the founder in Laguna.

## Ramos blames 'ports war' for Smokey Mountain row

THE US-BPRT compromise over the Smokey Mountain road is just a "temporary" fix for the "temporary" row between the two nations over the Smokey Mountain road project.

Ramos said he hoped it could be a "temporary" fix for the "temporary" row between the two nations over the Smokey Mountain road project.



Ramos

Ramos said he hoped it could be a "temporary" fix for the "temporary" row between the two nations over the Smokey Mountain road project.

In his appearance before the Senate last week and the press conference before he left for China recently, Ramos mentioned that the Smokey Mountain controversy was precipitated by a rivalry among port operators in Manila. The former president said he could not see why the two nations would quarrel over an old issue like the Smokey Mountain road project.

### 'Legal showdown'

The former commissioner on urban planning, housing and environment and the construction and justice, welfare and development investigated the Smokey Mountain project in 1990 and found nothing wrong with it. Four years later, the House committee on good government also looked into the project and concluded that it was legal and aboveboard. Ramos and his press appearance mentioned.

"All relevant questions and issues about the project have already been raised, examined and fully addressed," Ramos said.

Ramos suggested that the project submission involves a "deeper investigation" into the "bribe" "good will" among port operators in Manila to determine for us how whether this is the end and issue before the Smokey Mountain project.

Recently six months into its operation, the Smokey Mountain Port Terminal in Manila was able to accept the bulk of non-containerized cargo-handling operations at the Port of Manila, choosing to leave the long-held monopoly of container ports International Container Terminals Inc. (ICTI) and Asian Terminal Inc. (ATI) to the business, according to the home-grown report.

In January, BPRT started offering non-containerized cargo-handling services through shore but by June, BPRT was able to grab all of the non-containerized cargo volume handled by

ATI in 2003 and a third of the non-containerized cargo volume previously controlled by ICTI by providing better service, faster turnaround time, modern and efficient facilities and more competitive rates to its clients, it added.

### Pending application

BPRT has a pending application before the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) since 2002 for an unrestricted port license, which will allow it to move the P1.6-billion container and cargo-mooring previously dominated by ICTI and ATI.

At last week's hearing of the Senate blue ribbon committee and the Senate committee on government corporations and public enterprises on the Smokey Mountain project, Ramos suggested that those docking business interests want up, instead of trading, to form a consortium and undertake the modernization of South Harbor and the coastal area of ports and towns like Calapan, Malabon, Navotas and Marikina.

"My humble suggestion is to have all such business deals and interests parties come together in a consortium and jointly undertake, by way of reclamation, the upgrading and modernization, so the government may assist in joint venture agreement, of the South Harbor and the coastal area of each city or Calapan, Navotas and Marikina, where modern and new living areas and safety measures due to prevent flooding of their harbors," Ramos said.



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<b>Issue Date:</b>	Oct. 7, 2004
<b>Maturity Date :</b>	Oct. 8, 2009

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## SC DECISION

## Leave barangays alone, DILG told

By Philip C. Tabaca

THE SUPREME COURT has ruled that the Department of Interior and Local Government cannot take over the National League of Barangays, saying that this would endanger local autonomy.

In a 37-page decision dated Sept. 27, the tribunal reversed an Aug. 1997 decision of the Calocan Regional Trial Court which allowed the DILG to temporarily take control of the league after it was hit by internal squabbles over the election of its officers.

The high court also declared as unconstitutional two DILG circulars which effectively deposed Alex David, the league's presi-

dent in 1997, and set supplemental guidelines for the league's synchronized election of officers in that same year.

"These acts of the DILG went beyond the sphere of general supervision and constituted direct interference with the political affairs, not only for the Liga (the league), but more importantly, of the barangay as an institution," said the decision penned by Justice Dante Tinga.

"The mantle of local autonomy would be endangered and remain an empty buzzword if unconstitutional, illegal and unwarranted intrusions in the affairs of the local governments are tolerated and left unchecked," he added.

The league is the organization of all barangays and holds the power to determine its representatives to the municipal, city, or provincial councils.

While the league is primarily governed by the Local Government Code, it is empowered to make its own constitution and by-laws, including its own election rules, the high court said.

"The election of Liga officers is part of the Liga's internal organization, for which the latter has already provided guidelines... Clearly, what the DILG wielded was the power of control which even the President does not have," the tribunal said.

"As the entity exercising super-

vision over the (league), the DILG's authority over the Liga is limited to seeing to it that the rules are followed, but it cannot lay down such rules itself, nor does it have the discretion to modify them," it added.

The court said that if there were violations of the league's election rules, it should have ordered the group to conduct another election, "in accordance with the Liga's own rules, but not in obedience to DILG-dictated guidelines."

"Neither had the DILG the authority to remove the incumbent officers of the Liga and replace them, even temporarily with unelected Liga officers," the tribunal said.

## UK renews advisory on travel to RP

THE BRITISH government has warned its citizens they face the risk of "indiscriminate terrorist attacks" while traveling around the Philippines even as it said that Westerners were targeted in the recent terrorist attack in Indonesia.

Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) reiterated its advice against travel to central, southern and western Mindanao, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and the Sulu archipelago, where operations against terrorist and rebel groups were ongoing and where kidnappings and bombings have taken place.

It said there was a "high threat" from terrorism and kidnapping throughout the Philippines, and advised UK citizens to take particular care in the rest of Mindanao, Manila, Palawan and at coastal resorts and tourist centers throughout the country.

"There continues to be threats against Western interests and there is a danger of collateral damage from terrorist attacks targeted at others," the FCO said, adding that public transport in the Philippines was risky, whether by road, rail, sea or air.

"You should also be aware of the global risk of indiscriminate terrorist attacks, which could be against civilian targets in public places, including those frequented by foreigners," the advisory said.

The FCO recalled that Westerners were "deliberately targeted" in terrorist attacks in Jakarta this month and in August last year, and in the island resort of Bali in October 2002.

The FCO said, however, that Philippine authorities were taking steps to neutralize the terrorist threat, and had tightened security in the metropolis and other areas considered at "high risk," including airports and seaports.

UK citizens traveling in the Philippines were also advised to steer clear of animal markets and poultry farms to avoid catching avian influenza or bird flu.

The FCO noted the recent renewed outbreaks of avian influenza among poultry in Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, China and Cambodia.

"Travelers to the Philippines are not likely to be affected, but you should avoid live animal markets and poultry farms and places where you may come into contact with live poultry," the FCO said.

TJ Burgonia

## Mike A asks Customs to nab name-droppers

AFTER President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the Bureau of Customs to draft a short list of the big-time smugglers in the country, First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo asked the authorities to arrest traders using his name to fast-track the release of their illicit shipments.

In a statement, Arroyo said he had instructed his lawyer to inform newly appointed Customs Commissioner George Jesus "that nobody is authorized to use my name in any transaction in the bureau."

"Specially illegal transactions," said Arroyo, who had been implicated in the smuggling of rice, sugar, vegetables, vehicles, alcohol and dangerous drugs—which the President had begged as the most smuggled items into the country.

Arroyo said he "does not meddle and does not intend to meddle in governance."

Arroyo recalled that he had made the same appeal against name-droppers at the BOC and National Food Authority as early as two years ago. But rancors of his involvement in smuggling continued to persist.

Asked what President Arroyo would do if her husband was found to be involved in smuggling, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said this was "far-fetched."

Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.





## Ransom trail leads to case of money laundering

By David C. Dumas

THE GOVERNMENT has introduced a new anti-counterfeiting law to reinforce a Cuban-based syndicate which succeeded in issuing its million peso (C\$) bill, free from the kidnapping of a signature in recent last year.

On the first day of the biennial conference, the new 100,000-sq-ft, four-story building will be cracked open to the public. The public is invited to see the interior of the building, which will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, October 1. The building will be open to the public on Saturday, October 2, and on Sunday, October 3. The building will be open to the public on Monday, October 4, and on Tuesday, October 5. The building will be open to the public on Wednesday, October 6, and on Thursday, October 7. The building will be open to the public on Friday, October 8, and on Saturday, October 9. The building will be open to the public on Sunday, October 10, and on Monday, October 11. The building will be open to the public on Tuesday, October 12, and on Wednesday, October 13. The building will be open to the public on Thursday, October 14, and on Friday, October 15. The building will be open to the public on Saturday, October 16, and on Sunday, October 17. The building will be open to the public on Monday, October 18, and on Tuesday, October 19. The building will be open to the public on Wednesday, October 20, and on Thursday, October 21. The building will be open to the public on Friday, October 22, and on Saturday, October 23. The building will be open to the public on Sunday, October 24, and on Monday, October 25. The building will be open to the public on Tuesday, October 26, and on Wednesday, October 27. The building will be open to the public on Thursday, October 28, and on Friday, October 29. The building will be open to the public on Saturday, October 30, and on Sunday, October 31.

**Panasonic**  
Ideas for life

the family in Japan. According to the AMLE, Yukio Iwata, the kidnapped man's daughter, said the money from Tokyo in the strange account of a stolen bag is a donated commercial bank in Lapa Lapa.

After the ransom money was received in the bank account, several withdrawals amounting to 100,000 yen were made through automatic teller machines, according to the AMLE.

Junzo Nig moved out to the bank.

Despite the run-down apartment, Sennett and Robinson and his whereabouts are unknown.

The central idea of the paper depends on the following assumptions:

- The dependent variable is the number of deaths.

A separate kidnapping for ransom case against Bacula and his associates is pending trial before the Lapa-Lapa City regional court.

Money laundering is a crime to which proceeds from an unlawful activity are reworked to make them appear to have originated from legitimate sources.

The law against duty honey allows the government to foot into any instance, whether it might, a series of a collection, needs at least 100,000.

This gives the impression the heavy police crackdowns against street vendors demand acquiescence or forced to be "without any credible purpose or right, on the lying basis of illegality."

The Philippines is home to a number of well-known brands, including the country's largest telecommunications company, Globe Telecom. The company is a leader in the market for mobile services, and its brands are well-known throughout the country. The company's success is a testament to the power of branding in the Philippines.

The PEST has organizations benefiting the southeast of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which includes the powerful Group of Seven-dominated entities.

money laundering. In 2003, Congress passed an Anti-Money Laundering Law, but the IMF was not convinced that the new legislation had complied with international standards.



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# The World

Editor Laurente B. Guio

## Italian, Egyptian hostages freed in Iraq

**BAGHDAD**—Two female Italian hostages seized in Baghdad three weeks ago were freed on Tuesday along with kidnapped Iraqi and Egyptian in a flurry of releases. An abducted British remained under threat of death.

In their television report said two French journalists were also due to being freed, but the French government declined to comment. The two freed Italian and women, Ilsema, her wife and daughter, were seen safe and well. Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi said. They and two Iraqi colleagues seized with them had been held in "difficult" conditions, he said. Some of the Italian captives, accused of pay accidentally shot and Italian television showed her presence of the jet carrying the two

Italians, as they are en route to be flown to Italy, took down at Camp Bucca at 11:15 p.m.

"We are well," the two said in reports before they were taken away for questioning to extensive negotiations involving multiple hostages. Within minutes of their release, an Egyptian telephone company said that one of its employees captured last week had also been freed.

But the fate of British hostage, engineer Kenneth Nicks, who was seized 12 days ago and has

been threatened with beheading, remained unclear.

For and Nicks, both aged 30, were taken at gunpoint from their central Baghdad office on Sept. 7 in a brutal kidnapping that jolted the thousands of foreigners working in Iraq.

"This is an extraordinary case of joy" and Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini, who flanked Arab and Islamic leaders in helping Nicks during the crisis, at Kuwait said said earlier on Tuesday the women's captives had signed to free the hostages for a \$1 million ransom.

Accompanying them were in passengers, Berlusconi said the secret service had located their where-

abouts after the work, but said that was only willing to return their release the Italian government had preferred to negotiate.

He said the breakthrough came early on Tuesday "after a night which led to a very difficult choice with two lines of attack which could have been easily confused."

He gave no further details and declined to say how many.

Despite the flurry of releases, which follows the freeing in Monday of an Iranian diplomat had signed nearly two months ago, there has been no word on the fate of Nicks, 30, abducted in person with two American colleagues from their Baghdad home. Nicks



**SHOUL** (left), and Ilsema (right) are smiling upon their liberation from a Christian military airport, late Tuesday night.

## US travel checks flawed, invasive, says watchdog

**BETHLE**—By subjecting most visitors to scans of their faces and fingers, the United States has taken a step toward a mass surveillance system that threatens freedom and civil liberties, a privacy watchdog says.

From Thursday, new visitors entering the United States will have several more scans. In part to help on a plane, they are electronically scanned it, and to have subject photo taken.

The United States says its FBI says already in place for travelers entering the country, and now being added out more widely—will add an average of just 15 seconds to each check and will enhance security.

It says the technology data will be stored in a database, along with personal information such as full name, date of birth, citizenship and passport number, and will be used to verify, conduct, immigration and law enforcement officials.

London-based rights group Privacy International said in a report on Wednesday that the system could be flawed, inaccurate and opaque, even worse than those in which some people would find themselves wrongfully identified as security threats.

"There is no end to the case to which this

system is subjected will be put, not any meaningful freedom or boundaries leaving the flow of this data," it said.

In 2001, the United States said it was to be deployed from the United States as a permanent system who had been held of security watches.

Added Canada by an authorized, Miller said was deployed in Iraq by US agents in 2002 and was to be used there. He is using US on said, but he says were using on US from Canada that marked Canada as a suspect of Osama bin Laden's attacks on 9/11.

"The system is not accurate, and played with security," Privacy International said. It said that bin Laden's name and Miller would be disproportionately targeted.

"What is the system for doing more and less a surveillance than the number of links and Muslim studies will make some way in mind, checked, ignored, as for bin Laden's name," it said in a subsequent report.

The United States says the US-Viet system will protect both citizens and visitors, guard privacy and facilitate legitimate travel and trade.

Reuters

## US scientists, 10 Nobel laureates launch campaign against Bush

**WASHINGTON**—US scientists, including 10 Nobel laureates, have launched a campaign in Iraq to oppose the policies of President George W. Bush.

The group, Scientists and Engineers for Change, was created at the beginning of the week, battling global warming, Iraq's nuclear program, and the war in Iraq.

The 25 members of the organization has scheduled a series of conferences, during which they will try to convince their audience that the Bush administration has chosen science as a political tool.

The scientists will speak on issues including Iraq, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Oregon, Virginia and Wisconsin, where Bush could be sworn by the state's local industry.

"This administration's policies and actions on science have made it increasingly difficult for science to play a role in public policy-making," the group said in its website, www.scientistsandengineersforchange.org.

They said this attack was "not surprising" to scientists who said during his campaign that "the party is science-orientation."

According to the website, "The attack will not change what the American people view as a leader who respects the rules and integrity of science and the scientific method."

In addition, the group said, "President George W. Bush's scientific policies have severely limited prospects for solving the global warming and environmental problems as a tool for enhancing economic competitiveness."

The founding members of the new group include Nobel Prize winners Peter Agre (Chemistry, 2003), Sidney Altman (Chemistry, 1980), Charles Townes (Physics, 1982), Douglas Osheroff (Physics, 1996) and Anne Aronson (Physics, 1976) as well as the new National Science Foundation director and head of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, Neil R. A. A. A.



## PHILIPPINE DERMATOLOGICAL SOCIETY

# So the Public May Know

**T**oday, there is an alarming, unrelenting proliferation of "skin clinics," owners of which boldly and misleadingly call themselves "dermatologists."

Several of these establishments are actually cosmetic parlors, while others are manned by physicians who are self-proclaimed dermatologists. Are they really legitimate dermatologists? Dermatologists are licensed medical doctors who have undergone 5 years of training on the science of dermatology which includes diagnosis and medical and surgical management of disorders of the skin, hair and nails. More attendance in seminars, workshops or conventions, both locally or abroad, without the basic three-year dermatology training is certainly not enough to make one a dermatologist.

In the country, the Philippine Dermatological Society (PDS) is the only recognized accrediting body for dermatological training. It is likewise the **only** society recognized by the Philippine Medical Association for dermatology. Now, fifty two (52) years in existence, it has pioneered and brought dermatology to high distinction in the Philippines. Currently, it has a total membership of more than one hundred qualified dermatologists many of whom have obtained further training and recognition abroad. The PDS is a member of the International League of Dermatological Societies and the League of ASEAN Dermatological Societies.

We, therefore, warn the public to be careful in choosing to whom you will entrust your skin.

**PHS Secretariat:**  
PDS, 1101 East Ave. (Cebu City) 6000, 1101 East Ave. (Cebu City) 6000, 1101 East Ave. (Cebu City) 6000  
Tel. No. (032) 522-0171 to 522-0173 • Fax No. (032) 522-0173 • Email: pds@pds.org.ph • Website: www.pds.org.ph

## Private rocket ship aims for \$10-M space prize

**MINNEAPOLIS**—A three-seat rocket plane will launch today on a mission to win a \$10-million prize for the first private rocket ship to reach orbit.

The rocket ship will launch on Thursday to qualify for a \$10-million prize for the first private rocket ship to reach orbit.

The rocket ship will launch on Thursday to qualify for a \$10-million prize for the first private rocket ship to reach orbit.

in Mike Mohr, because the first private rocket ship to reach orbit.

Mohr, who is a former astronaut, will be enough fuel to send the rocket ship to orbit.

On Wednesday, SpaceShipOne will launch on its first mission to reach orbit.



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2004

The WORLD

A 9

# Asia bird flu death toll climbs to 30

BANGKOK—Vietnam confirmed a new bird flu death to bring Asia's human toll to 30 on Wednesday, while Thailand ratcheted its flawed efforts to control the epidemic after reporting its first likely case of the virus jumping from one person to another.

The latest reported death was a 14-month-old baby in Hanoi, who became Vietnam's 20th victim. He was sickened with bird flu's typical symptoms of fever and coughing on Aug. 28 and died Sept. 5, a Vietnamese Health Ministry official said on condition of anonymity.

That announcement came a day after Thailand raised concern among health experts by reporting its first case of probable human-to-human transmission of the virus—a 35-year-old woman who became the country's 10th confirmed fatality.

Prasert Sodchuan died Sept. 20

of bird flu, probably after catching the disease while taking care of her sickened daughter Sakuntala in a hospital. The 11-year-old died Sept. 12 but was cremated before she could be tested to confirm she had bird flu.

The recent deaths in Vietnam and Thailand are part of a second wave of outbreaks since the disease first swept through the poultry stocks of much of Asia at the start of this year, killing or forcing the cull of tens of millions of birds. A total of 30 people have died.

New outbreaks of bird flu in recent months also have been reported in Malaysia, China, Cambodia and Indonesia.

Prasert is the first person believed to have contracted the disease from another human, rather than poultry. She had never come in contact with poultry and did

not live with her daughter who was being raised in a village where chickens were bred.

Prasert's 32-year-old sister, who also had tended Sakuntala in

the hospital, was diagnosed with bird flu Monday and is now in an isolation ward, as is her 6-year-old son. Both are listed in good condition.

AP


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**LIFE**

Sarah Jane Parker

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**LIFE**, one of the 20th century's most influential periodicals, will be reintroduced to more than 12 million readers in the US by Time Inc. on Oct. 1. The magazine has been updated to reflect contemporary feel and will include fascinating stories, photographs and tips and ideas for these weekend. The debut issue features Sarah Jane Parker as its cover story.

www.life.com

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Quake shakes California

PARTRIDGE, California—A strong earthquake shook the state Tuesday from Los Angeles to San Francisco, cracking pipes, breaking bottles of wine and knocking pictures from walls. There were no immediate reports of any injuries from the 6.9-magnitude quake and its more than 100 aftershocks. The quake was centered about 11 km southeast of Partridge, a town of 37 people known as California's earthquake capital. The town is one of the world's most seismically active areas, located on the San Andreas fault. "Things were shaking so bad you couldn't tell where to go next," said Partridge/Vineyard owner Harry Miller, who grows 63 tons of wine grapes. "Trees shaking like brooms, and dust coming from everywhere." The quake tipped over about 300 cases of his wine, and five or six of Miller's buildings—including his home—were damaged. Most of his water pipes burst. The quake struck at 10:15 a.m. and was felt along a 563-km stretch, as far north as Sacramento and as far south as Sta. Ana, southwest of Los Angeles. The center was about halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

AP

### Palestinians mark uprising

RAMMILAH, West Bank—The Palestinian uprising marked its fourth anniversary with signs that the violent Hamas group is preparing a formidable political challenge to Yasser Arafat, despite a series of devastating blows from Israel. Hamas published newspaper ads urging supporters to vote in upcoming municipal elections, saying "It's time for change." A top Hamas leader also indicated that the group may challenge Arafat in presidential elections, which have not yet been scheduled. The uprising erupted on Sept. 28, 2000, after Ariel Sharon, then Israel's opposition leader, visited a sensitive Jerusalem hilltop revered by Jews and Muslims. Palestinian riots broke out, and five months later Sharon defeated Ehud Barak in a special election for prime minister. The fighting has taken a heavy toll on both sides, killing more than 3,000 Palestinians and nearly 1,000 Israelis.

AP

### US 'Taliban' seeks release

SAN FRANCISCO—John Walker Lindh, serving 20 years in jail for fighting alongside the Taliban, asked the US government on Tuesday to lessen his sentence after it decided to release a second American captured in Afghanistan. Lindh, 23, dubbed the "American Taliban," was captured in 2001 during the Afghanistan war and was sentenced in 2002 after a plea deal. His lawyer, James Grossman, said he had filed an appeal to commute the sentence after news that a long-held accused enemy combatant, Yusef Hamdi, was to be flown from the US to Saudi Arabia on Tuesday. A Saudi-born US citizen, Hamdi was captured on the same day and place as Lindh. "I hope America can find it in her heart to forgive John," Lindh's mother Marilyn Walker, a homemaker, told a news conference. "John has admitted he made a mistake when he went to Afghanistan in June 2001 to fight in the civil war between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance. Despite what people may think, John Lindh took no action whatsoever against his native country."

Reuters

## SPORTS

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Email: [pr\\_sports@inquirer.com.ph](mailto:pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph)

By Teddy S. Malabanan

## UAAP showdown up

By Joanne M. Pags

FOCUS and determination

The team that has more of these will end up as champion when the UAAP Tansuwan and the De La Salle Archers clash in a semifinal for the UAAP women's basketball title at the Sports Coliseum.

Game 3 of the best of three series showdown is at 4 p.m. right after the Adamson Lady Falcons take off their title defense against the Ateneo Lady Eagles in Game 1 of the women's basketball at 2 p.m.

PU's Arlene Sarmiento and La Salle's Mar

## GAMES TODAY (Sports Coliseum)

2 p.m.—Adamson vs. Ateneo (Women's Basketball)  
4 p.m.—De La Salle vs. La Salle (Women's Basketball)

Coliseum will help decide the champion.

Games, the women's Most Valuable Player, voted to lead the Tansuwan to their second straight championship.

"I'll give everything, and if I don't work, at least we can help the team. We have a championship to defend," said the 5-foot-4 forward.

But Gonzales is just as intent on giving the crowdback to the Archers.

"We can still bounce back. The problem with my teammates and my coach. The pressure is more on PU because they know it's hard to beat La Salle twice," said the second-year player, who has the MVP in UAAP in her early career in the National First.

Just like their main men, PU's Arlene Sarmiento and La Salle coach Franz Pumaren are under tremendous pressure.

"Everything that we have worked hard for will come out in the game. I think the team

A10-11



PUMAREN



BAGAL

## Senador, Gonzales to Chess Olympiad

MANILA (AP)—National Master Francisco Senador and International Master Joyce Gonzales picked up 3.5 points in the last two rounds of the 34th World Chess Championship, Sunday and completed the Philippine team for the Chess Olympiad next month in Russia.

Senador finished second with 11 points behind eventual winner and early Olympiad qualifier IM David Levitsky and Gonzales checked third place with 11.5 points thanks to an excellent 20-year-old Wesley So, who scored 11 points along with IM Roman Dzindzichashvili and IM Oliver Gurevich.

So, scoring a first leading into the match at the Tagaytay International Convention Center here, won in 30 moves of a French Defense and pushed Gonzales into a draw way for fourth with 11 points along with IM Roman Dzindzichashvili and IM Oliver Gurevich.

The youngest ever finalist in the event occurred this year by Tagaytay City Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino and the First Grandmaster Provisional finished with 7 points.

"Although we go into an Olympiad, we still have to go into it as a team," said So, who finished in 10th place, scoring 10 points, and was the only Filipino to score 10 points in the Olympiad. "I'm happy with my showing, even if I did not finish in the Top 10, I'm proud to represent against the good players," said So, whose scores included a win and a draw against Asia's top chess champion IM Vladimir Kramnik and Russia.

Gonzales, who will be in her first Olympiad, beat IM Levitsky in the final round to take a half point lead over Sarmiento with his match against So still ongoing.

"I always thought that he is the better of the two," said So, who finished in 10th place, scoring 10 points, and was the only Filipino to score 10 points in the Olympiad. "I'm happy with my showing, even if I did not finish in the Top 10, I'm proud to represent against the good players," said So, whose scores included a win and a draw against Asia's top chess champion IM Vladimir Kramnik and Russia.

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WFM World's Top 100 ranked So as the 10th in the world, while Senador is 15th in the world. So, who finished in 10th place, scoring 10 points, and was the only Filipino to score 10 points in the Olympiad. "I'm happy with my showing, even if I did not finish in the Top 10, I'm proud to represent against the good players," said So, whose scores included a win and a draw against Asia's top chess champion IM Vladimir Kramnik and Russia.

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# 4 kidnap suspects fall in raid in Cavite town

**MANILA**—Police arrested four suspected members of a kidnap group, including a former Army sergeant, in a series of operations in Cavite, Cebu.

Police and police on July 23, a former Army sergeant based in Cavite and two other suspects, 31, were arrested in a series of operations in Cavite, Cebu.

The four were members of the "Papa" kidnap group, which was active in Cavite, Cebu, and was active in Cavite, Cebu.

The group had kidnapped a former Army sergeant, who was active in Cavite, Cebu.

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It said the arrest came after one of the four suspects was arrested in Cavite, Cebu.

"This was when we learned that the group was active in Cavite, Cebu, and was active in Cavite, Cebu."

Police arrested four suspects, including a former Army sergeant, in a series of operations in Cavite, Cebu.

The group had kidnapped a former Army sergeant, who was active in Cavite, Cebu.

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# MILF open to autonomy, says envoy

**COBATOWN CITY**—Lupang Mambasalan Salinas Adon said it was likely that the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) would settle for an autonomous government in exchange for ending the country's decades-old Muslim rebellion.

Salinas Adon said the MILF was open to autonomy, but it was not open to a full-fledged state.

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# Palace tells Isabela gov to answer case on workers' relief

**SARAOI, Isabela**—Mandilingan has ordered Gov. Mario Garcia to answer a case on workers' relief.

Mandilingan said the case was filed against Garcia for not providing relief to workers.

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# Military denies US troops' involvement in clash with Sayyaf

**COBATOWN CITY**—The military denied reports that American troops were involved in a clash with Sayyaf.

The military said the reports were false and that no American troops were involved.

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# New bridges now finished in Pangasinan, Mindanao

**THE DEPARTMENT OF Public Works and Highways** has completed two bridges in Pangasinan and Mindanao.

The bridges were completed as part of a program to improve infrastructure in the regions.

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# Oil price hike can justify pay raise, says labor exec

**By Martin Mari**  
The 500,000 oil price can be used to justify a needed increase in the minimum wage in one sector, says Labor Secretary Maanabing Pineda.

World oil prices rose to a record \$70.9 a barrel yesterday and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said it will increase inflation rate for September.

Innocent said the wage increase

would have to be tackled by the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards where groups set the minimum for wage increases in one year but said a rise a provision that when there is a significant increase in the cost of living, it should be made.

He was referring to Rule 71, the

last of the Revised Rules of the Labor Code on Minimum Wage Fixing, which says that any wage rate set by the board may be increased if there is a significant increase in the cost of living.

**Justification**  
However, the labor secretary said it is not of increasing conditions such as an inflationary increase in

the price of petroleum products and basic goods and services, the board can decide to raise living standards.

The Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards (TWPs) said that a 3-percent inflation rate could be interpreted as a justification for a wage increase.

In July, the rate of inflation was below 3 percent.

After labor groups filed last petition, because of increases in oil prices and transportation costs, the TWPs said.

Innocent said the wage board decisions would be based not only on the capacity of employers to pay but also on the need to protect jobs.

**Capacity to pay**  
"We look at the capacity of employers to pay," he said.

It is affordable as it is not to raise inflation like a wage increase, but it is the job protection, he said.

The TWPs would recommend wages to be set for the coming year.

"If they take advantage of the situation and say no, we will be the winners," he said.

He said the TWPs would recommend wages to be set for the coming year.

# Diesel price seen to soar till December

The Department of Energy (DOE) said that given the volatility of the market, the price of diesel oil will continue to rise until December.

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for the month of August, the price of diesel oil rose 15 percent more than in July.

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**PP BEAUTY IN YOSHI**  
Major International (Miyoshi) Inc. (Miyoshi), including Miss Philippine Margarette Rose, took part in a good-will program to the second Japanese capital of Kamakura's celebration of Tokyo before the beauty pageant which is held on Oct. 14.

**Second straight day**  
DOE reported that the price of diesel oil rose 15 percent more than in July.

The DOE said that the price of diesel oil will continue to rise until December.

**Growing demand**  
Innocent said the rising demand for diesel oil is the main reason for the price increase.

The DOE said that the price of diesel oil will continue to rise until December.

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**Basic reason**  
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# Amnesty for Oakwood mutineers under study by Palace

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## Caloocan jeep, trike drivers fight over turf

By Edson C. Tumbok Jr.

A BLOODY war between jeepney and trike drivers in Caloocan City over turf left hundreds of commuters stranded yesterday morning after jeepney owners from Gen. Santos to Patero (Manila) were allowed by the police.

Trike organizations had blocked roads used by the jeepneys. In some instances, drivers were chained to some of the vehicles.

With jeepneys on the Avenue Marikina the road, the jeepneys started using the 4th Avenue road, only to be blocked by trike drivers.

Thousand, mostly jeepney & trike-stopped playing their games.

Later afternoon, the city police and the city Trike and Federal Regulation Services department temporarily arrested the jeepney and trike drivers who took to the streets.

A trike organization using the 4th Avenue road said that jeepney drivers used to use up to 5th Avenue.

But because the local government had recently issued 3rd Avenue into a one-way road, jeepneys drove down Road, forcing jeepneys to 3rd Road, leading to the 4th Avenue road.

The jeepneys had been taking passengers every three minutes, 4th Avenue jeepney up

street and drivers association president Alvin Buntad told the Inquirer.

This was not the first confrontation between the two groups.

In February, a similar incident happened, resulting in injuries to both groups.

Gen. Santos to Patero jeepney used to pass through Caloocan Road on their way to Marikina City.

But when the local government closed up traffic in Marikina City, the jeepney movement in C3 and 3rd Avenue. The Local Transportation Planning and Regulatory Board had approved the movement, the jeepney drivers said.

The jeepney had severely affected the daily rate of trike drivers because commuters found it cheaper riding jeepneys passing through the city roads.

To solve the problem, former Mayor Reynaldo Buntad directed the trike jeepney drivers who would pass through south of the city of the jeepney route. The arrangement appeared to have pacified both parties, and commuters benefited.

In a meeting yesterday with City Hall, trike drivers agreed to not another route along C3 and 3rd Avenue, but south of the city. Jeepney drivers, on the other hand, were said to have an agreement that they would not pick up passengers along trike routes.

## Masbate mayor, father arrested by NBI in Las Piñas

By Leticia B. Salazar

THE MAYOR of Masbate town in Masbate and his father were arrested by National Bureau of Investigation agents in Las Piñas City yesterday on the strength of a warrant issued against the pair for a murder case involving the death of a school supervisor in their town.

Reynaldo Buntad, 37, and his father Carlos, 67, a former Mayor, were arrested by agents of the NBI, formerly Marikina Division Police Office (MDO) in a house on Celler Lane, Villamorina Subdivision, in Las Piñas City early yesterday morning.

The NBI MDO issued the warrant "whereby the pair are charged, and had placed them under surveillance, said NBI Deputy Generalissimo Manager.

Father and son were implicated in the killing of Florio Cruz, the public schools district supervisor of Masbate, on April 3, 2004.

Cruz was shot dead in front of the Gloria Elementary School in Villa Isabela, Masbate. The local police in the area had conducted an investigation and arrested the father and son, who were charged with the killing.

Reynaldo and Carlos both denied involvement in the killing.

Carlos said that Cruz had been a very close friend of his, he would have been impossible for him to kill.

Reynaldo said the killing could be politically motivated, adding that their mother could have had a hand in killing them in the case.



CARLOS and Reynaldo Buntad

"What I saw in the classroom, that was when I was charged of the incident," he added.

The young friend would be seen on the way to a town fiesta at the time the killing took place.

Carlos, on the other hand, told reporters that he and his son were in Masbate only this month, for the purpose of filing a petition for review of their case before the justice department.

The Buntads said they had no money to pay a lawyer to Philippine Federal Police chief General Edgardo Alayon because they had read that the police have been told to hunt down them.

Carlos said they were just waiting for their lawyers to file the petition before their case was set, but the NBI arrested them yesterday.

## TMG sets recovery target of 5 stolen vehicles monthly

By Christian F. Figueroa

ALARMED by the rising number of car thefts across Metro Manila, Philippine National Police chief Director General Edgardo Alayon vowed yesterday the force on the number of stolen vehicles the Traffic Management Group is required to recover.

All TMG personnel nationwide now have a target to catch five "hot" cars monthly, according to Chief Supt. General Mangla, TMG Director.

Incidents rise in December at least five car theft syndicates during the same period were

also related to the rise in the theft, the director added.

Alayon said that follows in comply with the new directive issued on 21 October last year.

The PNP chief said the new order was aimed at tightening up the work of the police officials and the increasing problem of car theft nationwide.

Alayon said and around five vehicles are stolen daily in the country.

Most of the car thefts happen in Marikina, with the cities of Quezon, Manila and Muntinlupa among the most dangerous places for car owners, he said.

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# DTI warns public against dealing with 5 suspected 'pyramiding' firms

By Bernard W. Domingos

THE DEPARTMENT OF Trade and Industry yesterday warned the public against dealing with five companies suspected of engaging in pyramid schemes.

According to the DTI, the following firms have been subjects of inquiries related to pyramid schemes: Cymbiotic Inc., Chongco Holdings Corp., Interpreneur Club International Marketing Corp., Kingdom Commercial Philippines Inc., and Inter C-G Co.

The DTI Bureau of Trade Regulation and Consumer Protection (BTRCP) and these companies were not clear in the business advice they provided when they registered with the DTI and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Trade Undersecretary Adrian S. Cruzado Jr. clarified that it was not yet determined whether the firms were indeed engaged in pyramid schemes.

But Cruzado said the DTI was considering the possible involvement of the firms' assets.

Cases of business scheme registration since they did not advise the agency of their change of address.

BTRCP assistant director Julian Olmos said the firms had been trying to get in touch with the companies but, instead, discovered they were no longer in their registered addresses.

The firms were not under any suit or watch of the law, but these were referred to the police.

"The law requires companies to indicate if they move or change location," Olmos said. "This is meant to protect the public against fly-by-night companies."

DTI records showed that Cymbiotic was represented in two offices in Quezon City: Alcala Center, P.O. 31 Alcala Center, Quezon City, and Alcala Center, P.O. 31 Alcala Center, Quezon City. It also had offices in Quezon City, Alcala Center, P.O. 31 Alcala Center, Quezon City, and Alcala Center, P.O. 31 Alcala Center, Quezon City.

Kingdom Commercial was located at Suite 100, Ayala Life Bldg., 6706 Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Kingdom Commercial was located at Suite 100, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Kingdom Commercial was located at Suite 100, Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

In May, Trade Undersecretary Cruzado stated that the DTI had formed a specialized task force to investigate pyramid schemes, companies against which had been taken.

Partners and their with the task force in place, the DTI could then track the progress of the companies against providing and legally closing down on illegal marketing schemes.

The trade chief said operations of such schemes have been going on since one scheme, especially one was illegal business.



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## WB executive urges RP to initiate 'bold' reforms

By Doris C. Domala

THE WORLD Bank yesterday urged the Philippines to undertake "bold and timely" reforms, such as in fiscal management, financial restructuring, industry and labor relations, as well as a bigger share of income from the state.

World Bank director Jonathan van Duijn said the Philippines had the potential to be a prime location for investment in Asia, given its highly educated and entrepreneurial people and rich natural resources.

However, he noted that the Philippines was lagging behind other countries in East Asia as it was prevented by less competition. He added that a perception of high political and economic risks was reducing the attractiveness of the country as an investment location.

In the World Development Report 1991, which drew on surveys of more than 20,000 firms in 15 developing countries, it was noted that investment in a state of gross domestic product (GDP) was lower in the Philippines than in Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia between 1980 to 1990. This had significantly constrained the country's growth performance.

"The survey results show the need for improvements in transparency, credibility and predictability. Effective public actions to improve regulation, macroeconomic stability, curb corruption, and remove barriers to competition would increase opportunities and incentives for big firms as well as small firms," van Duijn said.

"Bold and timely policy reforms in a few key areas could quickly improve investor confidence," he said.

In line with the recent report, van Duijn cited some of the bank's suggestions to improve the investment climate in the Philippines:

- Implementation of a well-coordinated short- and medium-term public finance reform program to reduce public sector borrowing, increase efficiency and use of capital while increasing willingness of entrepreneurs and investors to undertake and finance new investments;

- Implementation of complementary measures to the Special Program for Investment Incentives Act to aid the restructuring of the banking and corporate sectors, such as granting immunity to regulators from political and legal harassment as well as quick resolution of the Corporate Recovery Bill and the Insolvency Bill;

- A systematic effort to lower the cost of doing business, and improve the judicial system and dispute resolution process, making the use of dispute resolution in the Philippines is currently among the highest in the world. Under such environment, firms limit their exposure and lower their cost of risk, resulting in lower levels of technology transfer, supply of capital, and greater integration into production networks; and

- Improvement in private participation in infrastructure as well as complementary and connecting infrastructure at the local level in order to leverage national infrastructure investments.

"Many incentives are in place and much more, waiting for reforms and actions to take to attract investment, financial sound management and commitment to reform will attract investment," the WB executive said.

"Investments will drive growth and employment, employment and improved public services will raise living standards for people, especially the poor. The key to this virtuous circle is credible and quick implementation of these reforms, in particular," van Duijn said.





AIMEI enthusiast tests the handle of a Silver motorcycle made by Zhejiang Nian of China, which was among those on display at a trade exposition in Manila.

## INFRA, SME, INVESTMENTS

# 3-pronged dev't strategy pushed

By Bernard W. Gonsky

TRACB Inc.'s Jose B. Fontana yesterday said his department was pushing for a three-pronged approach that would drive the economy to the level at which leading markets in Asia are moving.

Fontana said the campaign to attract the development of basic infrastructure, small and medium enterprises, and investments and exports.

"Our country needs like a jockey at 40 kilometers per hour doing rough terrain, but we should be aimed and more faster now that we are the superhighway of a global market," he said.

He explained that well-developed infrastructure was neces-



Fontana

ary to attract businesses while leading successfully overseas.

Strong push intended to address

structure issues in bid multiple

offer—that a PDI for gross invest-

ment product," Fontana said, "assuming that the government reduces 10 percent of the GDP in taxes, infrastructure pays for itself."

He had earlier said that the government was creating a Philippine Infrastructure Corp., which would undertake at least 10 major projects to help develop the economy.

Regarding IMF's, Fontana said Philippines—especially the very small contract studies—should be encouraged to start their own businesses and be their own best rather than be employees.

"We need to encourage them to enter into business after that create jobs even such as the operation of bicycles, jeepneys—which offer very little employment," he said.

Further, he said, the government needed to encourage more capital infusion from both local and foreign investors.

"General equity holders are increasingly cautious that they manage over \$100 billion in funds just from Filipinos. If we can convince them that Philippines is here both in the economy and invest their money in the country then private domestic investments could finance a critical mass of projects that would jump-start and sustain the economy."

About concerns on "Vandalism," Fontana said, the country was in a weak situation.

"The country has access to financial resources and the budget is manageable," he said.

## Intel remains bullish on RP

By Miguel L. Lina

IBM giant Intel Corp. is supported by three-time Filipino Ambassador to the Philippines, Jose B. Fontana, who said the country is now in a fiscal crisis, urging its commitment to the country is for the long term.

"We are aware of the situation, of course. We've been here for 20 years. We are not a newcomer and we are not a new guest. We will stay for the long term. We have a long-term perspective of our investments here," he said.

He said investors in a developing country like the world's largest chip maker, which has set up shop here in 1974, has assembly and office facilities in the 2nd Avenue Gateway Business Building in Pasig City.

Intel's local arm, Intel Microelectronics Phil. Inc., assembles and tests Intel microprocessors and chips.

Philippines is a key component in cellular phones, which also plays an important role in computer manufacturing, semiconductor test units, digital cameras, photocopiers, printers and other household appliances.

Microprocessors and chips are used in the logic of the computer, but it is the manufacture of the widely used silicon microprocessors.

The local Intel plant employs more than 5,000 employees who make large numbers of processors from silicon wafers and operations and functions vital to the chip maker's global operations.

In 1988, Intel invested \$140 million in Asia to which it Philippines operations developed.

While giving assurance that Intel would like to stay for the long term, Fontana also said the company's General Manager plans years ago to witness the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the local Intel arm and the Commission on Information and Communications Technology.

## RP taxes among lowest in Asia—DOF

By Michele V. Rente

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance released a World Bank study that said "high" taxes in the country were partly in Manila for low income earners, saying that taxes were actually the lowest in the region.

Finance Undersecretary Grace Tan said in a report that Philippine tax rates were comparable with prevailing rates in the region, adding that the local value added tax rate was one of the lowest.

DOF data showed that the Philippines imposed a 10-percent VAT, against the 11 percent in Malaysia, 17 percent in China, and 2.5 percent in Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka, Korea, Korea, Nepal, Indonesia and Thailand also imposed a 10-percent VAT.

The DOF referred to the World Bank Development Report for 1989, which said that high tax rates in the Philippines were among the top three countries in doing business here, along with an available power supply and exemption.

Other countries that were policy uncertainties and risks.

Tan said taxes could not be blamed for low investments because tax rates in the Philippines were competitive.

"If tax rates here are even as high, plus incentives are provided with many fiscal incentives," said Tan.

She also defended the government's proposed tax increases, saying that the low tax rates in the country provide a lot of room for additional taxes. She added that the proposed structure were not even more taxes, but merely a reevaluation of existing taxes.

"But the only 'new' products, services and skilled were found much lower in the Philippines than in other countries."

She said corporate and skilled very of low-level rates in the low-income Philippines, she said.

In the DOF's proposed bill on new taxes, tax rates on corporations would be increased by 10.1 percent and to induce greater industrial productivity.



# Milk firm heeds call to save underfed children

By Michelle Y. Reyes

WYNNON is one of many children living in a slum area in Pasig City. But he does not play like other boys. Instead, he has to be motivated by mothers who fear he could lose even with.

Fortunately, he became one of the beneficiaries of the feeding program of Mead Johnson Philippines. And after just six months, he took his first steps.

Reyes is one of the thousands of children that have fled from Mead Johnson's "Mama, Sleeping Under My Big Mead Johnson" campaign.

As Ann Macalino-Juanon, Mead Johnson corporate affairs manager, said, Mead Johnson launched the program to respond to the government's urgent call to reduce the number of malnourished children.

## CORPORATE CITIZEN



MY BENEVOLENCE—Malnourished Malabug

According to Malabug, milk is expensive, thus poor families could not afford

to buy it for their children.

Through the feeding program, chil-

dren of good families are given an equal chance of being fed with Mead Johnson

milk products, like Enligans, Lactogen, Stero-Gene and Lactogen.

The milk-feeding program is divided into two levels.

Under one module, 50 malnourished children from a project site, aged seven years old and below, are fed with their milk requirements every day for six months.

The number of glasses given to a child per day depends on his or her malnutrition level. Nevertheless, parents are encouraged to monitor the health of their children based on their age and weight.

Summit said that a two-year-old, for instance, should weigh 12 kilos. The father can be brought to the clinic regularly, the more glasses of milk a child can drink.

The milk-feeding program is being carried out nationwide.

It is a tie-up between Mead Johnson, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the civil government organization Bantay Bata.

The local DSWD unit implements the program and Mead Johnson assists in providing the milk milk, and help Bantay Bata in monitoring the children's progress.

Under the program started in July 2002, over 2,000 children in 37 sites have been fed. Mead Johnson spends about P120,000 worth of free milk for every project site, Summit said.

Malabug recalls Sumit's graduation.

"The graduation was very emotional. When his name was called, he personally walked toward the stage to get his diploma. Everybody was so happy to see him walking away like a winner," said Sumit.

Sumit said that the program does not end with feeding the children with milk. Aware of the importance of sustainable development, Mead Johnson (DSWD) and Bantay Bata consider such crucial by giving nutrition training to the children's mothers.

He said the training includes teaching mothers how to prepare low-cost nutritious meals, advising them on what feeding yet cheap food for their babies, the mother, budgeting, and cooking.

The most crucial life-giving aspect with this milk feeding, as well as managing plastic with their fish or some of the low-cost protein sources that are sought by the mothers.

Sumit said the training sessions are prepared by the DSWD, which also takes charge of feeding the children.

Mead Johnson likewise wants to not limit its give to the children, she said.

Teaching mothers with manager resources how to provide and those feed to their children is important to ensure sustainability of the children's health.

Summit said Mead Johnson hoped that the milk-feeding program, which the company continues to be its permanent social responsibility project, could significantly help in the government's nation-building efforts.

Feeding children—especially the young—remains a one of the first priorities that before the government could consider of economic progress, he believes Mead Johnson.

Mead Johnson moved to the Philippines in 1962, and established its first manufacturing plant in the country, situated along Ortigas Avenue in Alabang, in 1964.

Mead Johnson Philippines is now one of the leading milk manufacturers in the country, and is contributing dollars to the Philippines through its exports to Indonesia.



WILD—Sumit's baby with Mead Johnson staff



MY BENEVOLENCE—Ago, 14-month-old from Laguna

















# Blurred or missing cable TV channels

**T**WO cable television subscribers have had it, complaining about channels that are either blurred or nowhere to be found on their sets.

They're also fed up with the coming and going of repair crews that cannot seem to get to the root of the problem. Now, they want to complain to the appropriate government authorities, hoping to get action on the company's disservice.

"I'm sick and tired," complains R Sanchez, a customer of Destiny Cable who relates in his e-mail to us that sometimes the missing channels are 37 and 38. But nowadays, he says, he cannot even find channels 82 Deutsche, 84 and 88.

According to him, teams of repairmen have come and gone to check his unit. There are two different groups: the "inside" crew checks the television set, and the "outside" (preventive maintenance team) people look at the node or main box on the street. The box supplies signal to the connected cables.

Sanchez adds, "The technical teams never give us an answer when we ask what is causing the problem. And when I called customer service for the first time, they told me I was the only one complaining in my area. Contrary to that claim, I have spoken to another subscriber on our street with the same complaint. Through your columns, may I request other subscribers who experience the same problem to text me at 0919-3914791, so we can take collective action against this (disservice)?"

We can say that he is not alone in his distress. Somewhere along Singalong Street lives this subscriber with Global Destiny account number 7033280, who sent us a similar complaint. She wrote, "I called up the company asking them to send a technician because the channels from 38 and above were blurred, grainy and sometimes outright unviewable, with the color fading to almost black and white. The person who answered on the other end said there was really some problem with those channels from their end, and their technicians were trying to fix it. She couldn't say when the

## THE CONSUMER

**Marietta Velasco Giron**



One subscriber complains that though not a single letter or number is missing from the peso bills he pays the provider, he still gets incomplete service

maintenance work would be completed. To this date, the said channels remain blurred."

Sanchez quipped at the end of his letter, "My payments (to the cable TV company) are always complete, and no letter or number is missing from the peso bills I pay them. Why can't we have the complete number of channels we're supposed to get from their signal? ES. I would appreciate information on what government agency oversees these companies."

### Where to send complaints

Cable TV subscribers of Global Destiny (the company also has an Internet service) who need to complain or inquire about service can call up customer care at 8419333. It can be an ordeal, however, having to deal with the automated call distribution system that handles all incoming calls.

First, you dial the main trunkline and

wait for a taped voice to tell you what extension line to press on your telephone. We did just that—several times, mind you—and invariably got the reply, "The party you are calling is unavailable. Please try to call later."

To answer the query of R Sanchez, the government agency that oversees cable TV concerns is the broadcast department of the National Telecommunication Commission (NTC), tel. 9243744. It takes care of complaints and inquiries regarding cable TV radio and television.

By the way, the NTC also has a separate department that handles concerns about cellular phones, telephones and Internet. Readers who wrote to us about billing complaints against cellular phone companies, for example, can call the CCAB (Common Carrier and Authorization Department), with tel. no. 92440326. For more information on both areas of concern, call the One-stop Public Assistance Center at 9244079.

A word of caution: don't call after office hours. It's a government office, after all.

### Q&A

From Jan Samonte of Novaliches, QC: "The channels on my television are sometimes blurred. The repairman said the trouble was with my TV and he advised me to buy a new one with a flat screen. Who can help me with my problem?"

We don't handle this kind of question, which is a technical matter. Nevertheless, we consulted our cable TV technical consultant and got the following comment that answers the reader's query:

"The clarity of image on the television screen depends basically on the quality of the signal it is getting from the antenna (or cable, as in the case of cable TVs) it is connected to. Flat screens are an improvement on earlier television screens. Its main advantage over the common curved screen is that it reduces reflections."

The technician did not want to comment on whether or not the flat screen improves picture quality.

## Cooking classes

LEARN techniques in preparing Japanese traditional dishes and specialties from Maya Kitchen and Chef Seiji Kamura on Oct. 2, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

The classes will cover, among others, Sushi and Maki, Chiken and Miso Yaki, secret formulation of teriyaki sauce and three kinds of Japanese salad and dressings. Participants will also get a free "Secret of Japanese" cookbook.

Maya Kitchen is also offering classes in Whisking and Battering Batters, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., on Oct. 2, 9 and 16.

Learn how to bake "Cookies and Bars," Oct. 2, 1:30-5 p.m., and get a bonus Decadence Brownie.

Visit the Maya Kitchen (Thursday-Gaturday), 8/7 Liberty Building, A. Amak Avenue (formerly Pany Road), Makati City.

Call 8921185/5011 local 108. Or e-mail mkitchen@ultimateinfo.com.ph.

## Festival of flavors

BREADTALK, Singapore's premiere boutique bakery, is offering its own version of the mooncake. The mooncakes come in four special flavors: single-yolk Green Tea, White Lotus Paste, Red Lotus Paste and Golden Pardon.

The mooncake festival celebrates the day when the moon is supposed to be at its biggest, brightest and closest to earth.

BreadTalk's mooncakes are available at its Glorietta 4 branch while supplies last. The mooncakes come in signature BreadTalk packaging in two or four pieces, for P388 and P600, respectively.